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UNCLAS SAN JOSE 002071

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WHA/CEN
EB FOR WCRAFT, BLAMPRON, JSHANNON
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STATE PASS TO USAID FOR DSKORIC, LWITTE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: COSTA RICA: FOOD AID AND THE WTO

REF: (A) SECSTATE 155973

(B) SAN JOSE 1549

1. On August 29, 2005, Econoff delivered non-paper to Doris Osterlof, Vice Minister of Foreign Trade (COMEX), Melissa Delgado, Advisor to the Minister, and Ronald Obaldia of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. COMEX is the lead GOCR organization on this issue and shared the information with other Ministries involved in the matter of food aid.

2. In a letter dated September 1, 2005 in which he responded to the non-paper, COMEX Minister Manuel Gonzalez wrote "... as discussed in the Agriculture Committee, food aid disciplines should ensure that such aid does not distort local markets of beneficiary nations nor displace exports from other member countries, nor be used in such a manner as to elude complying with export agreements or requirements." He further offered that "...Costa Rica will continue to focus on food aid in the following areas: evaluation of needs, role of organizations, food aid in the form of donations and grants, transparency, and emergency food aid." He specifically addressed the non-paper topic as follows: "With respect to the proposal presented by your government, we will study it and expect to make pertinent comments at the next special meeting of the Agriculture Committee in September."

FRISBIE